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C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 001857

SIPDIS

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TAGS: PHUM PREL IR BM CG ZI KN NL UNGA UNHRC UN

SUBJECT: DUTCH: SUMMARY OF EU THOUGHTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

REF: A. SECSTATE 197183

1B. SECSTATE 206381

1C. 7/18 CARTER PERRY-WITMER-HUNT EMAILS (NOTAL)

Classified By: PolCouns Mary E. Daly Reasons 1.5 (b) and (d)

1. (C) Following delivery of HR reftels on July 21, MFA Senior Policy Advisor for Human Rights, Hans Docter (protect source), confirmed that the EU will introduce UNGA resolutions on Burma and the DRC; a decision on Iran has been postponed until early September, but appears likely. Docter also shared EU concerns on Guantanamo, U.S.-EU relations on HR issues, and EU thinking on the reform of UN human rights system. He also recommended holding high-level U.S.-EU consultations on human rights.

UNGA - Iran, Burma, DRC, Zimbabwe, North Korea

2. (C) The EU recently agreed internally to wait until early September to make a final decision on an Iran resolution. The Dutch strongly favor a resolution, and Docter commented that there is much greater support for one this year than last year. Barring any major improvement in the human rights situation between now and September, Docter is "fairly confident" that the EU will introduce a resolution on Iran. The EU will introduce resolutions on Burma and the DRC. The Dutch would also like to see an EU-sponsored resolution on Zimbabwe, but internal disagreements, especially by the French, remain. (Note: The Dutch appear willing, if the U.S. agrees, to work with the U.S. in encouraging specific African countries to introduce a Zimbabwe resolution. End note.) Docter brought up the subject of North Korea, noting that the EU is waiting and watching to see what the US and Japan will do.

Guantanamo

3. (C) Docter broached the situation in Guantanamo, stating that the EU remains concerned over the lack of information about the status of the prisoners. (Note: The MFA highlights this topic in every discussion involving human rights. The issue remains popular in the Dutch press and with members of Parliament. End Note.) While the Dutch are not calling into question the treatment of the prisoners, the GoNL shares EU concerns about prisoner access to due process, the possibility of closed trials, and the death penalty. Docter opined that if the U.S. agreed to exclude the possibility of a death penalty sentence, EU interest and concerns would greatly decrease.

EU: U.S. Needs To Do More

4. (C) In an informal meeting of EU human rights advisors on July 19 in Venice, Docter stated there was obvious resentment of the U.S. Many EU member states are of the opinion that the U.S. pressures Europe into taking on "the major HR issues," but later "takes all the credit" for hard-fought EU successes. At the same time, the U.S. does not adequately support issues of importance to the EU. The Dutch disagree with this assessment. Nevertheless, Docter commented that if the U.S. were more supportive of the EU on, for example, Turkmenistan and Chechnya, such EU resentment would likely diminish. Docter also suggested the U.S. approach the EU Presidency to propose high-level U.S.-EU human rights talks. U.S. officials might then also visit influential EU capitals, as occurred in preparation for last year's UNCHR.

Reform of UN Human Rights System

5. (C) Docter said the EU is looking at ways in which to reform how the UN approaches human rights. No decisions have been made to date. However, discussion includes doing away with the UNCHR, leaving the third committee in charge of dealing with HR issues. The EU is also internally assessing how the UN could increase cooperation and the operational effectiveness of UN agencies already dealing with aspects of human rights. (Note: The Dutch will serve on the next UNCHR. End Note.)

RUSSEL